

SLOPER RECORD BOOKS information supplied by Stephen Steere.

After having no physical contact with Slopers, the last twelve months has seen a positive flurry of visits by our members to the works at Westhampstead. These have been reported in previous Bulletins. What has not been emphasised is the fact that Slopers die record books have been made available to us.

Many of the die record books which are obsolete have been given to the Society. Unfortunately, we suspect that others had been thrown away only months prior to our first visit.

The record books which are still in use have also been shown to us and two members, Stephen Steere and Dave Hill, have been allowed to take photographs of every page. It took five and a half rolls of film to complete the task. They were denied permission to take them from the premises to photocopy, although this would have been far more convenient.

The die records are in a ring binder and Stephen thinks they only go back to the 1950's. This could fit in with the renewal of the perfin blocks after the blitz, when the works, dies and records were destroyed, (See Roy Gault's article on Sloper Provisionals elsewhere in this Bulletin.)

The book was not in strict alphabetical order and contained over-prints as well. Most of the dies show identities as well but there is some duplication and also changes in identity. Stephen is now trying to put everything in alphabetical order, note new dies to Edwards and new identities to Tomkins. At the beginning of February he had 225 new identities to Tomkins, 96 which enlarge the information in Tomkins and 10 identities confirmed which were only provisional before. The book also shows whether the die is a 12 multi die (converted to 10 for decimal issues) or a single die.

When the work is completed it will make interesting reading and fill in many gaps in the more modern perfins. Most of these dies should be found on GVI and QEII stamps, which are more likely to be in all our collections. How, and in what form, this information is ultimately going to be made available to members has yet to be decided.